

What is claimed is:

1. A method for treating a pharyngeal airway having a pharyngeal wall of a patient at least partially surrounding and defining said airway, said method comprising:
selecting an implant dimensioned so as to be implanted within said pharyngeal airway;
said implant having a mechanical characteristic of elasticity to be biased toward a rest position; and
placing said implant into said airway with said implant biasing said airway to patency.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is placed beneath a mucosal surface of said pharyngeal wall.
3. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant includes a fibrosis-inducing material.
4. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is a polyester.
5. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant has a longitudinal axis and said implant is placed with said axis extending transverse to an axis of said pharyngeal airway.
6. A method according to claim 5 wherein said implant is curved to conform to a curvature of said airway.
7. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant has a longitudinal axis and said implant is placed with said axis extending parallel to an axis of said pharyngeal airway.

8. A method according to claim 1 wherein said implant is not connected to a bony structure.
9. An apparatus for treating a pharyngeal airway having a pharyngeal wall of a patient at least partially surrounding and defining said airway, said apparatus comprising:
 - an implant dimensioned so as to be implanted within said pharyngeal airway;
 - said implant having a mechanical characteristic of elasticity to be biased toward a rest position selected to bias said airway to patency.
10. An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said implant is adapted to be placed beneath a mucosal surface of said pharyngeal wall.
11. An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said implant includes a fibrosis-inducing material.
12. An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said implant is a polyester.
13. An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said implant has a longitudinal axis and said implant is adapted to be placed with said axis extending transverse to an axis of said pharyngeal airway.
14. An apparatus according to claim 13 wherein said implant is curved to conform to a curvature of said airway.
15. An apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said implant has a longitudinal axis and said implant is adapted to be placed with said axis extending parallel to an axis of said pharyngeal airway.